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ABSTRACT

A random sample of professors employed in colleges and universities that offer teacher training programs in behavior disorders resulted in 51 professors, (69% response rate) participating in a survey. Professors were asked to list titles of 10 books that a graduate of a training program in behavior disorders should have read. Books, journals, and studies recommended by at least three authorities were included in a bibliography of 67 books, 3 studies and 3 journals. The references are listed alphabetically by author's name. Citations include title, publisher, date, and number of times the publication was recommended. The ambiguous nature of the term "behavior disordered" may have accounted for general comments about the paucity of books on the topic. (CL)

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A BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR TEACHERS OF THE BEHAVIORALLY DISORDERED

Eugene Pernell

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Abstract

The author conducted a survey to identify books that teacher educators consider important for those completing requirements to teach the behaviorally disordered. A random sample was taken of professors employed in colleges and universities that offer teacher training programs for working with behaviorally disordered persons. The sample included all geographical regions of the United States. The survey requested titles of ten books tha' a person finishing a training program on the behaviorally disordered should have read. Fifty-one professors replied with complete data. They represented 69 percent of those surveyed. Books, journals, and studies recommended by at least three authorities on behavioral disorders were included on the bibliography. The bibliography, which represents the collective judgment of professionals in the field, is offered for consideration to individuals who want to become well informed and to those who prepare bibliographies for preservice and inservice training in the field of the behaviorally disordered.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR TEACHERS OF THE BEHAVIORALLY DISORDERED

Eugene Pernell[1]

Introduction

College and university educators who prepare teachers to work with behaviorally disordered children and youth are frequently consulted regarding training approaches and literature. Of special interest is the selection of test books and references. Practitioners and university students ask what are the most important books that will allow them to become informed on the topic of the behaviorally disordered.

Although professors usually make a practice of including a selected reading list with other class materials for students in their courses, the reading lists are personal and reflect the professors' own experiences, training, philosophies, and biases. The need for a list of readings reflecting a broad perspective precipitated a survey of teacher educators to ascertain which publications they considered to be important in the field of behavior disorders.

Other disciplines have conducted similar surveys on a national level. Koenke (Note 1) conducted a national survey of reading program directors to determine which books would be recommended to a first-year elementary teacher who wished to start a personal professional library in reading. The data enabled him to eventually develop a list of the 20 most frequently cited titles. The National Council of Secondary Teachers of English has also published a list of books called a "Minimum Professional Reference Library" (1975). They also published a minimum professional reference library for secondary school teachers (1976). Each author of a reference text-

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[1]Eugene Pernell is an associate professor in the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Special Education and a post doctoral fellow with the IRT.

book included a special reading list in the bibliography section of his/her publication. These reading lists are germain to the content of the particular text.

The Department of Education of the State of Michigan (1970) yielded to requests by educators to develop a bibliography on the behaviorally disturbed by categorically listing many books and periodicals used in educating perspective teachers in the field. This bibliography was developed by a committee and reflects the thinking of that committee, which may be one of the limitations of that effort, as opposed to a cross-sectional view of educators over the country.

Survey

This survey focuses particularly on the direct responses of teacher educators for the behaviorally disordered and their selections of recommended readings.

Seventy-four colleges and universities offering teacher training programs in the field of behavioral disorders were sampled. These represented all geographical regions of the United States. The heads of these programs were requested to list the titles of ten books that persons completing a teacher training program on the behaviorally disordered should have read. Respondents were not required to list categories, rank order their preferences, provide printing dates, or describe contents in order for their suggestions to be included. Respondents were free to list books not directly related to the emotionally disturbed, and the response sheet reserved a section for comments. Many of those completing the survey thought it was a good idea and requested that copies of the results be made available to them.

Fifty-six of the 74 responded; four respondents had no training programs on the behaviorally disordered. Therefore, 51 or 60% of those contacted were able to submit complete data. The rationale for limiting the survey to 10 books was to encourage respondents to be more selective. Their lists were tabulated to identify the most frequently mentioned titles. No attempt was made to categorize their responses.

The following comments may be viewed as limitations of this survey. Several respondents noted that they excluded the many new books on the market because these have not been read by their students, so they did not feel at liberty to list those books. Some respondents noted that certain books were included or excluded because of their controversial nature. Still others included certain books because they were easier to read. Some differentiated between books thought to be designated for undergraduates and those for graduate students. While no judgment of quality can be claimed from the resulting bibliography, it is interesting to note those books most frequently listed are into second, third, and fourth editions. If a title does not appear on the following list, readers should not assume that it lacks value. Also, while professors did not necessarily list textbooks, several respondents noted that they encouraged students to become familiar with the many textbooks on behavioral disorders.

Many respondents mentioned studies that they felt were extremely important and because the selected journals and studies may be of interest to readers, they are included here along with their frequency count. These studies and journals will be listed in separate categories and in order of their frequency mentioned. All books, studies, and journals mentioned at least three times are included herein.

The lack of unanimity was the most striking finding. There were 79 books mentioned only once or twice; a finding similar to Koenke's.

Insights

Several comments were made regarding the paucity of books written specifically for behavior disorders. This was unexpected. Although some respondents noted a dearth of books on the topic, I have observed that over the last six years some excellent books have been published on the behaviorally disordered person. But due to the all emcompassing nature of the term, "behaviorally disordered," clear delineation may be possible only for authors while practicitioners find labeling useless because each person with a behavioral disorder has unique problems. For example, at least five other respondents suggested that a book's content reflect developmental skills as part of the training for careers with the behavioral disordered. Other respondents were concerned about the lack of books dealing with (1) the characteristics of behaviorally disordered persons and (2) "good" comprehensive methods in teaching about behavioral disorders.

Ideally, professionals in any field are well informed via professional conferences, reading journals, research reports, and books covering a wide range of topics. At the practical level, though, conversations with many in the field seem to indicate that those who read widely and critically beyond course requirements may be the minority. So this national survey has served to develop a broader reading list than might occur on a particular professor's suggested or assigned list in a college or university.

There are several limitations of this survey. First, sampling of a much larger group of college and universities might have further broadened the bibliography. Second, no intermediate school district responsible for inservice training in behavior disorders was surveyed, although much training occurs there. Third, I am ambivalent about excluding

all books listed by respondents regardless of their frequency of listing (respondents may have these by writing to the author). Finally, priority listing by the respondents would have made a statement about the quality of the listed books; prioritizing is recommended for future surveys. Recognizing the limitations of this survey, it will nevertheless have served its purpose if it allows training institutions to look more closely at reading material presently used in colleges and universities across the country, calls attention to books not recognized before, and spurs an interest in reading more widely in the field of behaviorally disorders.

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[2]Numbers in parentheses indicate how many times a publication was recommended.

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